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Washington, DC – Yesterday, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04) [spoke](#) before the Second Annual Native American Health Care Conference hosted by Native Nation Events. This event aims to highlight the latest developments and legislative issues affecting to Native American health care. Congresswoman McCollum emphasized the need for the federal government to fulfill the trust relationship.

"The federal government has the responsibility to fulfill its trust obligations, so when I walk into facilities that are not up to standard – I am ashamed that our government has not lived up to its responsibility. The deplorable conditions I have witnessed at times are not the tribe's fault. They are the failure of the federal government to act responsibly. Because of this failure, Indian children attend school in dilapidated buildings that should be condemned. Yet we expect them to learn!," said Congresswoman McCollum. "This has to change, and this is why I am excited to stand here and be with you today, because I have seen Indian communities do amazing things when they are empowered and have the tools that are needed for success."

"To have successful outcomes in Indian health, we need dedicated and health providers, engaged government officials, and we need funds. The only way to have real success is if every person in this audience, and all of your communities, and people like me are all standing together. You have the ideas and the solutions, but what you need are informed and engaged partners at every level of government. Throughout history, you have persevered, even in the most dire and trying circumstances, and even when our federal government has failed you time and time again. The time for failure is over."

The Native American Health Care Conference was attended by over 80 tribes and leaders in the Native American community, Indian health program leaders, health care providers, medical personnel, and other Native American health advocates.

Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.

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